



The
National Intelligence
Daily

Published by the Director of Central Intelligence for Named Principals Only

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~NOFORN-ORCON~~

RUFF [REDACTED] UMBRA

d/crs

Copy No. 134

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 31, 1975

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 303

TCS 737/75

Moscow Has Stiffened Support for Angola Group

Moscow has, if anything, stiffened its public support for the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola in the wake of statements by US officials that the USSR's behavior in Angola calls into question the depth of the Soviet commitment to detente. A principal theme of recent Soviet media coverage on Angola has been that detente does not foreclose Soviet support for revolutionary change.

The USSR has backed up this assertion with a continuing airlift of military supplies to Angola and has dispatched a destroyer to waters off West Africa to show the flag. The USSR is paying a sub-

stantial economic tab for its own involvement, and presumably for the Cubans' as well.

Diplomatically, the USSR has exerted a considerable effort to line up support for the Popular Movement and to justify Soviet aid as a response to South African intervention.

Moscow's words and deeds make it clear that Angola has become the occasion—perhaps intentionally, more likely fortuitously—for the Soviets to assert that they will not allow the US to establish the ground rules of detente.

Moscow is saying that if the US does not bring power to bear in a given arena,

the Soviet Union will not forgo opportunities to strengthen its position in the world.

Unresponsive to Argument

Given the divided opinion in Washington on the proper US role in Angola, the Soviets are unresponsive to the argument that their actions in Angola will unduly complicate broader relations with the US. The detente atmosphere was soured over trade, emigration, and strategic arms issues before Angola became a problem.

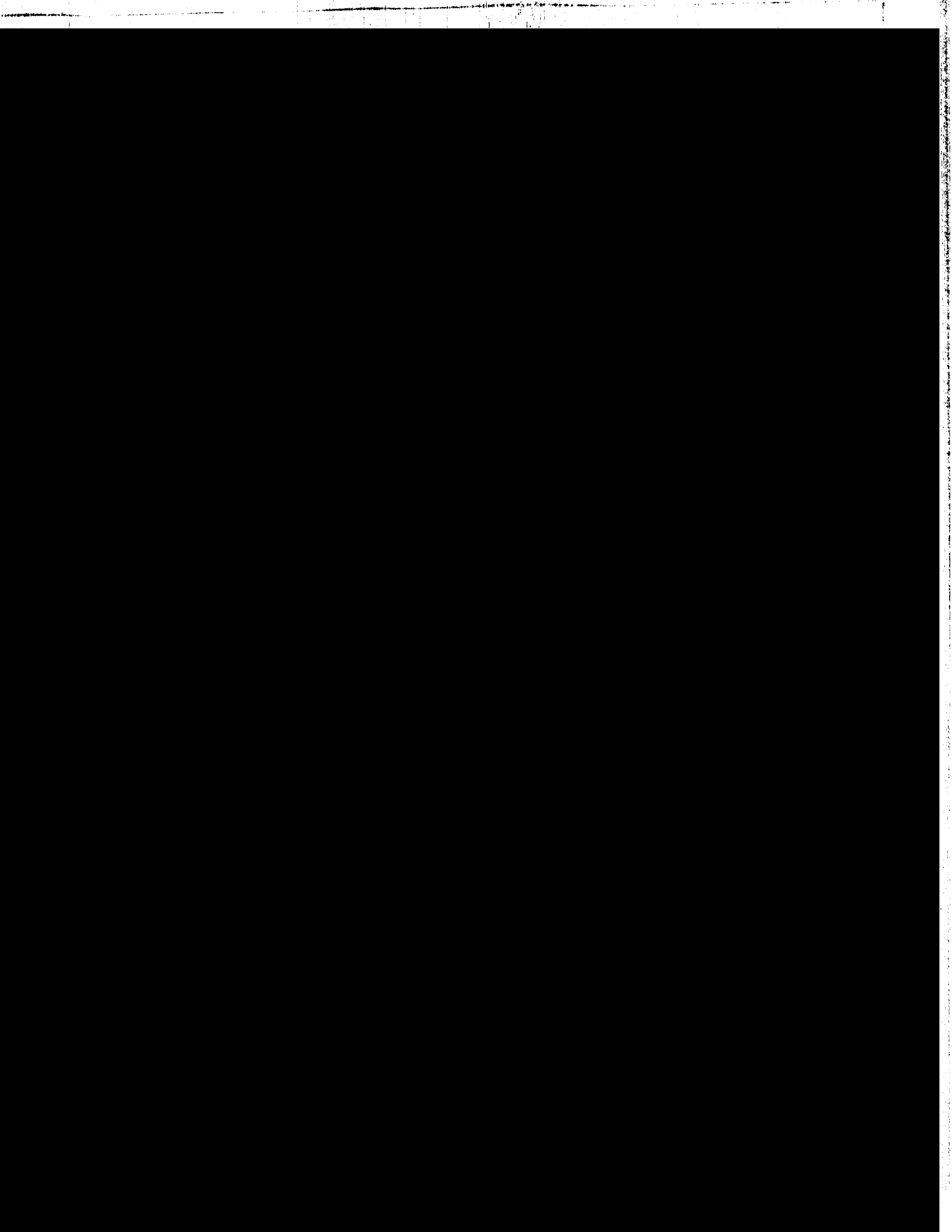
In light of US gains at Moscow's expense in the Middle East, and recently in (See Soviets... Page 4)

~~TOP SECRET~~

CW-2641-110

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~



Soviets Ignoring Argument That Angola Policy Will Affect Detente

From Page 1

Portugal, the Soviets are likely to view complaints about the incompatibility of detente and Angola as hypocritical.

Moscow is skeptical that Washington will step back from a second strategic arms limitations agreement or refuse to sell its surplus grain because the Popular Movement strengthens its hold on Luanda. The Soviets probably calculate that the "real" interests of the two countries, which are the heart of detente, are not very likely to be affected very long by Angola.

Brezhnev may also have good domestic political reasons for pursuing a tough line now on Angola. He can use it to demonstrate that detente does not inhibit the USSR from taking advantage of opportunities for "social progress."

Angola could, to some extent, offset communist setbacks in Portugal, the disappointing aspects of the Helsinki conference, and the "loss" of Egypt. Moreover, with a party congress approaching, Brezhnev probably finds it politic to stress orthodox ideological themes.

clined to show some restraint if it is convinced it will have to pay a substantial price for continuing its current tough policy.

After a party congress, Brezhnev may feel less defensive about the US and less compelled to demonstrate that he is dealing from a position of strength.

The Soviets will also be paying more attention to the impact of their actions on US politics during an election year. Angola is the kind of place where the Soviets can afford to show restraint in the interest of abetting the election fortunes of the supporters of detente.

Whether the Soviets will actually restrain themselves will depend greatly on the situation on the ground in Angola. If there were a serious, US-backed threat to the continued existence of the Popular Movement, Moscow would probably increase its efforts.

The Soviets would, in that case, likely

send more arms, more Cubans, and more Soviet advisers. Moscow cannot afford another highly visible defeat, particularly where the "victor" would seem to be the US. The Soviets would probably not commit their own ground forces in significant numbers.

On the other hand, Angola does not yet figure so prominently in Soviet priorities that Moscow feels a strong imperative for an early and decisive victory by the Popular Movement.

Moscow, of course, does not control events in Angola, and the dynamic of the patron-client relationship is such that the Soviets would have a hard time keeping the Popular Movement reined in if victory seemed likely. The Movement could argue that the Soviets should not rob them of the fruits of victory for reasons unrelated to Angola.

Under these circumstances, it would be difficult for Brezhnev, or any other Soviet

leader, to be seen thwarting the Movement—by cutting back the flow of supplies—at the behest of Washington.

The third, perhaps most likely possibility, is that the conflict will settle into a stalemate. The Movement would then apply strong pressures for increased Soviet aid, but a stalemate would also probably lead other Africans to argue more forcefully for a political compromise.

In such a situation, the Soviets might accept a compromise solution rather than press for a Popular Movement victory over sustained US support of the other political forces in Angola.

If the Soviets had to make such a choice now, they would probably opt for raising the stakes in Angola in the belief that the US is not likely to become sufficiently involved to prevent them from accomplishing their objectives.

If the report is true, Moscow may be in-